



DEFINING THE FORCE

It takes a lot to take the fight to the enemy. The Air Force — with more than 690,000 active duty, civilian, Guard and Reserve forces — operates from some 100 countries in the defense of freedom.

Pilots, security forces and maintainers are some of the more common career fields that come to mind when thinking of Airmen involved in the global war on terrorism. But the

struggle also requires the skills of Air Force specialties people seldom see, or even know exist, such as clinical geneticists (all four of them), cytotechnologists and nurse-midwives. And the defense of freedom doesn't come cheap — in terms of lives lost or money spent training, equipping and supporting the Air Force war fighter.

More than a dozen Airmen have died supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.

And the monetary cost in defending freedom abroad requires a budget of more than \$93 billion to support the Total Force, and to provide for family members back home.

You can crunch the numbers, but you can't measure the intangible quality of Air Force people who willingly make personal sacrifices to ensure we live in a safer and better world.

— Master Sgt. Chuck Roberts